

CICS REPORT

A newsletter from the Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies at the University of the Fraser Valley



Community Celebrates Sikh Gurdwara Centennial 2011



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The New Year will begin on a high note for the Sikh community and the community at large in BC and Canada as it marks the centennial year of the building of the oldest Sikh Temple in North America, the National Historic Site Sikh Temple located on South Fraser Way (est. 1911). As the year unfolds, almost each month will be dedicated to an event in honour of the centennial. To kick-off the year, the City of Abbotsford will display a gallery of pictures of the National Historic Site Sikh Temple and other pioneer photos, starting on January 8, 2011, in its main lobby. Other events will unfold each month and the entire community is invited and encouraged to attend these events throughout the year. For more information on events please visit www.ufv.ca/cics/centennial and www.canadiansikhheritage.ca

CENTENNIAL CONFERENCE MAY 5-7

Transnational Punjabis in the 21st Century: Beginnings, Junctures, and Departures

In honour of the National Historic Gurdwara's Centennial, the CICS is hosting an international conference from May 5-7. The theme of the conference builds on the concept of the juncture as a point in time made critical by an occurrence of important and converging circumstances. The conference poses the idea that the moments and events that have shaped, and continue to shape, the transnational Punjabi imagination as well as its reality in the 21st century comprise a juncture that deserves discussion, analysis, and critique. We seek to better understand the beginnings and points of departures for this transnational cultural community amid its past and present trajectory of immigrant, settler, citizen, activist, and leader.

The goal of the conference is to develop a greater understanding of transnational Punjabis in the 21st century as a broad community with an ever-evolving identity, form and ethos of communities. The conference seeks to engage local, national, and international scholars on diaspora, migration, transnationalism, intergenerational and gendered processes, religion, history, language and Literature, art, culture, identity and cultural politics in relation to Punjab and its communities.

For more information please visit: www.ufv.ca/cics/conference

Contents

Community Celebrates Sikh Gurdwara Centennial 2011	1
Centennial Conference: May 5 – 7, 2011	1
Undergraduate Conference Call for Papers	2
Abbotsford Building Connections Partnership ..	2
Ehsaas South Asian Film Festival	2
DJ Sandhu presents at Royal Bank of Canada ...	2
Chair Sponsors Trade Award	3
UFV and BC Regional Innovation Chair host Vancouver Board of Trade Luncheon	3
SAPNA Hosts Diwali at the CICS	3
UFV SOUTH ASIAN LECTURE SERIES:	
Dr. Harinder Sandhu— Mata Sundri College, University of Delhi	4
Visiting scholar, Dr. Jan Neels— University of Johannesburg	4
Bidisha Biswas— University of Western Washington	4
Surinder Dhanjal— Thompson Rivers University	5
Gilli McLaren Presentation	5
Community Profile: Ken Uppal	6
SAPNA update	6
Visiting Scholar: Dr. Satya Sharma	7
Student Leader: Hargun Dhatt	7
On the CASE Gallery opens at CICS	8
Dr. Rajnish Dhawan presents at the Reach.	8
Upcoming Events	8
Comments/Suggestions	8
Publisher Information	8



CICS REPORT



Undergraduate Conference — Call for Papers

Constructs and Contradictions: Negotiation of identity, ethnicity, and nationality by South Asian youth

As the CICS prepares for its first undergraduate conference as part of the larger Centennial Conference from May 5 – 7, 2011, we are currently accepting abstracts from undergraduate students. The aim of the undergraduate students' conference is to give students an opportunity to explore how South Asian youth may struggle with issues of identity, ethnicity, and nationality and how they negotiate these issues and face an often conflicting and confrontational social response. These identities are always contingent upon the presence of both external and internal factors that initiate the cultural association, and often contradiction, in individuals dependent upon how they wish to be perceived.

An abstract should consist of 250 words, with institutional affiliation, the full name of the presenter, and contact information. It should be emailed to the organizing committee at: satwinder.bains@ufv.ca with the subject line: Undergraduate Conference by December 17, 2010. Further details can be found online at www.ufv.ca/cics/conference.

Ehsaas South Asian Film Festival

The sixth annual Ehsaas Film Festival took place over four Wednesdays in October and November at UFV. In recognition of the upcoming 10th anniversary of the terror attacks in New York, this year's theme was 9/11. Three films: Shoot on Sight, New York, and A Dream for Kabul, each presented a unique take on the effects and ramifications of this disastrous event on people all around the world.

A fourth film, Of Land, Labour and Love, though it did not address 9/11, captured the hardships faced by landless tribal peasants of Dasmanthpur, a block of the eastern state of Orissa in India. It was a unique opportunity as the director, Ajay Bhardwaj, presented his film to a captivated audience and shared his personal journey.



Director Ajay Bhardwaj addressing viewers at Ehsaas South Asian Film Festival

Abbotsford Building Connections Partnership

The CICS is pleased to announce that it will be partnering with the City of Abbotsford for the next three years in the implementation of the Abbotsford Building Communities project.



Professor DJ Sandhu at RBC Clearbrook Branch

The project aims to build intercultural and interfaith connections at both the neighborhood and community level, thereby reducing racial tension and incidents of racism. Through social interaction, engagement and joint activities held at intercultural neighborhood hubs and through the twinning of communities, the project increases mutual respect and understanding amongst its diverse communities. The project impacts communities throughout the city and promotes cohesion and integration with neighbourhoods. The CICS will assist in program evaluation of the deliverables under the project as well as undertaking the curriculum development for a course on Diversity Leadership Training.

DJ Sandhu presents at Royal Bank of Canada

DJ Sandhu presented a talk at the Clearbrook RBC branch on "Emerging Markets: Capitalizing on Business Opportunities in Canada" on October 21. The talk was attended by local business owners interested in tapping into the Indian market. The presentation was successful and fruitful for those interested in a macro look at major market areas in India. Following the talk, Professor Sandhu was available to speak to business owners and provide advice and suggestions.

CICS REPORT



Business Chair Sponsors Trade Award

October 2 was an evening of glitz and glamour as UFV faculty, staff, and students attended the second annual Mehfil Magazine Awards for Excellence at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver. The Royal Bank of Canada sponsored a table where they invited members of the CICS Student Advisory Committee, SAPNA. The master of ceremonies for the evening, world famous comedian Sugar Sammy, provided great humour and kept the evening lively. CBC's Tony Parsons and Gloria Macarenko also spoke on the contributions of the Indo-Canadian community. In total, eight awards were presented to leaders in the community ranging in areas from: academic excellence award to excellence in the arts award. As sponsor of the India-Canada Trade Award, the BC Regional Innovation Chair at UFV, Professor DJ Sandhu, presented the award.



UFV students and staff with CBC's Gloria Macarenko and Tony Parsons at the 2nd Annual Mehfil Magazine Awards for Excellence Gala, 2010



Kushal Banerjee giving the keynote address at the Vancouver Board of Trade

UFV and BC Regional Innovation Chair host Vancouver Board of Trade Luncheon

UFV and the BC Regional Chair in Canada India Business and Economic Development, with sponsorship from the Royal Bank of Canada, presented Mr. Kushal Banerjee who gave the keynote address at the Vancouver Board of Trade September 29.

In his first address to the Vancouver Board of Trade, Mr. Kushal Banerjee, CEO of Swordfish Services in India, shared over 20 years of IT, ITES, and telecom service industry experience in India and abroad. In 2003, Mr. Banerjee received the Udyog Rattan Award from the Institute for Economic Studies for Outstanding Contribution towards Industrial Development.

Mr. Banerjee provided critical insight into IT history, growth, and future in India, as well as detailing the many opportunities for companies in Canada, and particularly in British Columbia, to invest in India. He encouraged those present to "be a part of the growth story by investing into India and benefitting from its growing markets."

The event was sponsored by the Royal Bank of Canada and presented in co-operation with the University of the Fraser Valley, and the BC Regional Chair in Canada India Business and Economic Development, Professor DJ Sandhu.

SAPNA Hosts Diwali at the CICS

Members of the CICS's South Asian Peer Network Association hosted its most successful Diwali yet on November 5. Hundreds of people turned up to watch SAPNA's newest Bhangra, Gidhaa, and Bollywood dance teams wow the audience with vibrant performances. UFV president Mark Evered was also in attendance, and was very impressed with the performances and event overall.

In addition to performances, there was also Diya painting, free henna hand painting, a display on the history of Diwali, beautiful tea light displays outside the University House and delicious food!



Dr. Mark Evered with UFV SAPNA dance teams



CICS South Asian Fall Lecture Series



Dr. Mark Evered, Dr. Ram Singh Padwal, Deborah Greenfield and Dr. Harinder Sandhu

Dr. Harinder Sandhu
—Mata Sundri College,
University of Delhi

Dr. Sandhu, Associate Professor, Mata Sundri College at the University of Delhi India, presented two lectures at the CICS. Her first lecture was organized for members of the Fraser Valley Indo-Canadian Business Association, and sponsored by DJ Sandhu — BC Regional Innovation Chair in Canada-India Business and Economic Development. The lecture addressed "Organizational and Group Dynamics in the Indian scenario," and looked at inter-cultural dimensions, both at individual and organizational levels. Dr Sandhu flagged issues for ensuring smooth performance outcomes for future joint ventures between Canada and India.

Dr. Sandhu's second lecture, entitled "Psychology of Immigration," was presented for interested faculty, staff, and students on October 12. This lecture looked at the issues involved when populations undergo rapid diversification, including the relational aspects of diversity, covert perceptions and overt actions, and the attempt to homogenize communities by host communities.



Dr. Jan Neels

Dr. Jan Neels
—University of Johannesburg

On October 7, Dr. Jan Neels, Professor of Private International Law at the University of Johannesburg, presented his lecture on Muslim and Hindu personal law in South Africa. Dr. Neels' talk evaluated the progressive recognition of Hindu and Muslim personal law in South Africa, utilizing the criteria of protection of socio-economically vulnerable parties and other constitutional values.

Dr. Neels obtained his B Com, LLB, and LLM degrees, all cum laude, from the Rand Afrikaans University, now the University of Johannesburg. He was awarded the Faculty of Law medal and the Chancellor's medal during the course of his studies. Dr. Neels spoke at the CICS to a group of intrigued staff, faculty, and students and was very well received.



Satwinder Bains, Dr. Garry Fehr, Dr. Rita Dhamoon, Dr. Bidisha Biswas, Dr. Ron Dart, and Director Ajay Bhardwaj

Dr. Bidisha Biswas
—University of Western Washington

On October 20, Dr. Bidisha Biswas of the University of Western Washington, Bellingham, presented a talk titled "Just Between Friends: Bilateral Cooperation and Bounded Sovereignty in Counter-Terrorism Efforts." Dr. Bishwas discussed the 'Global War on Terror,' led by the United States, emphasizing the role of international alliances in tackling terrorist threats. By their very nature, international counterterrorism efforts challenge state sovereignty by requiring changes to both foreign and domestic policies. This, in turn, creates complex sovereignty issues and raises some interesting questions for closer examination. The talk was attended by students, community members, and faculty who posed challenging questions and raised a number of interesting issues.



Dr. Surinder Dhanjal (second from left) alongside community members and UFV faculty and students

Dr. Surinder Dhanjal
—Thompson Rivers University

On November 9, Dr. Dhanjal addressed UFV students, staff, and faculty as he discussed the Punjabi language through computer analysis and synthesis. Punjabi has been ranked amongst the top 15 spoken languages of the world. With more than 90 million native speakers, and more than 140 million speakers in 150 countries of the world, the Punjabi language assumes an international significance. Two languages (English and Punjabi) with totally different phonetics have been investigated by the author. The talk concentrated on the problems encountered during the linear prediction analysis/synthesis of these two languages.

A lifelong passion for Dr. Dhanjal, the Punjabi language has great significance for the Fraser Valley where it is the second most spoken language of the community after English. Participants at his talk encouraged Dr. Dhanjal to complete his research which will make Punjabi more accessible to the general public.



Local researcher, Gilli McLaren with community members, UFV faculty and students

Gilli McLaren Presentation

Local researcher, Gilli McLaren addressed UFV students and community members on November 17th, discussing the relationship of Charles Andrew to the independence movement in India. Charles Andrew and Mahatma Gandhi became friends when they first met in South Africa, where Gandhi was beginning to make a name by fighting racism and apartheid, armed with nothing but moral courage. Mahatma Gandhi loved him dearly, and Charlie Andrews reciprocated this love in equal measure, if not more.

Charles Freer Andrews (12 February 1871 – 5 April 1940) was an English priest of the Church of England. He was also an educator and Indian freedom fighter. Andrews greatly admired the philosophy of the young Mohandas Gandhi, and was instrumental in convincing him to return to India from South Africa, where Gandhi had been a leading light in its Indian civil rights struggle. Because of Andrews' contributions to the Indian Independence Movement, Gandhi and his students at St. Stephen's College, Delhi named him Deenabandhu, or "Friend of the Poor."

The talk certainly demonstrated Gilli's passion for his work as he kept the audience captivated through various forms of multimedia, including: video clips, images, and fascinating stories on the relationship between Gandhi and Charles Andrew.



C. F. Andrews



CICS REPORT



Community profile: Ken Uppal, *new chair of the Indo-Canadian Community Advisory Committee*



Tell us a little about yourself

I grew up in a small village on the outskirts of Ludhiana, Punjab. I attended Punjab Agricultural University in food engineering before shifting to an MBA program in central India. The genetically deep-rooted Punjab diaspora took me to Abbotsford — which I chose based on a strong Indo-Canadian community presence here.

My academic interests took me to the University of Guelph where I completed another specialized degree and did my MBA with a major in agricultural economics. For the last six years I have been working with Farm Credit Canada in Abbotsford helping farm families and commercial

agri-businesses for their capital-related needs. I have been living in Abbotsford from the last 10 years with my family.

What is your affiliation with UFV and the CICS?

I can count myself as an alumnus of UFV after completing a three-month certificate program in agricultural production & management. The CICS is another area of interest for me at UFV, which has attracted my attention due to its involvement in the local Indo-Canadian community. I had an opportunity to attend a few seminars/workshops and related activities hosted by the centre. I was invited to become involved as an advisory committee member in 2008.

What does the CICS offer to the community in your opinion?

The CICS was incubated with a focus on wider issues in the Indo-Canadian community, and has been strongly supported by local community members. As of date, the centre has contributed to a great number of activities which have continued to attract my attention. These include:

- Providing knowledge/access to different chairs or departments working in various

universities/colleges in India & Canada.

- Creating a stronger presence in the local media about the centre's past and future roles.
- Providing an opportunity for members from backgrounds in business, education, and farming communities to contribute in various ways at the centre
- Acting as a common platform to facilitate closer and more personable relationships between different organizations on their ideas and opinions about local and international issues in the Indo-Canadian/Punjabi community.
- Undertaking outreach far and wide to similar communities of interest.

What roles do you see the centre having in the future?

The success of the centre in the future will be defined more and more by the involvement of the members of the Indo-Canadian community. I think the next logical step for the CICS is to diversify its geographic and intellectual reach through wider audiences all over Canada.

SAPNA update

The South Asian Peer Network Association (SAPNA) has a new executive team which organizes on and off campus events. The positions are held by Raji Heer as the president, Raman Gill as vice president, Aman Dhami as public relations coordinator, Sheetal Deo as executive assistant, and Sidrah Ahmad as communications manager. Raji Heer is hoping to take SAPNA to a new level over the next few months by bringing in speakers to discuss various South Asian Issues and organizing a lecture as a lead-up to the undergraduate conference in May 2011.

SAPNA also has a Bhangra, Giddha, and Bollywood dance team that practises weekly and performs at community events. The teams are organized and led by UFV students who have a passion to share their cultural traditions with the wider community. For more information on SAPNA, please contact Raji, at sapna@ufv.ca.



CICS REPORT



Visiting Scholar, Dr. Satya Sharma — Associate Professor of Anthropology, Department of Religion and Culture, University of Saskatchewan

Tell us a little about yourself.

I was born in January 1, 1942 in Khurja City, U.P., India, in a lower middle class family with my father working in the Indian Railways. I did my BSc in 1959 in physics, chemistry, and mathematics, and then completed my MSc in anthropology. I then completed my PhD degree in anthropology at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, USA. I taught physics for two years in Ghaziabad, Delhi University in 1961. I joined the University of Saskatchewan in 1970 as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology & Archaeology and in 2008 I moved to the Department of Religion and Culture.

What attracted you to research specifically on India?

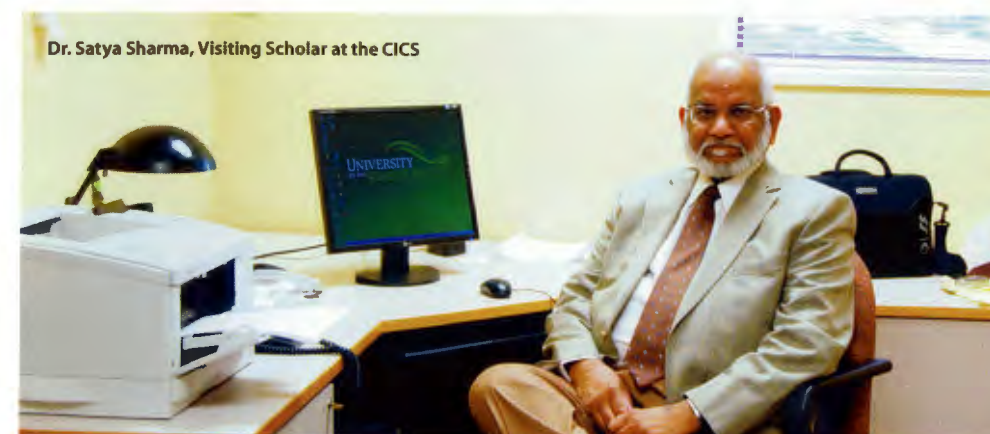
I was born and raised in India and my first spell of fieldwork was carried out in a peasant village of the then Union Territory of Delhi. This formed the basis for my master's thesis at Delhi University. I returned to the same village community in 1968 to undertake my PhD dissertation fieldwork for Cornell University. In the early 1980's I developed an interest in the South Asian diasporic communities of Canada and the USA. Recently I have developed an interest in the rise of fundamentalism in South Asia, and have developed and taught an undergraduate class on the topic.

What is your affiliation with the Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies?

I am a visiting scholar here at the Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies where I am undertaking a project on the health effects of pesticide use on the farm workers of the Fraser Valley, having completed a similar project in Yuba City/Marysville Region of Northern California.

Is there any current research you are working on related to South Asia?

I am currently involved in three projects relating to South Asia: firstly, I am working towards a monograph on the South Asian community in Saskatoon; secondly, after considerable research, I am in the process of developing a course on Bollywood Cinema and Popular Culture in India and the Diaspora; and thirdly, I am engaged in a study titled "Village Then and Now," which will be my last project during the current sabbatical. It will examine the impact of globalization and urbanization in an Indian village I have studied for 48 years and the fieldwork for this study will be carried out during January–May, 2011.



Dr. Satya Sharma, Visiting Scholar at the CICS

Student Leader Profile: Hargun Dhatt, Dep't of Psychology



What are you studying at UFV? What are some of your future goals/aspirations?

I am enrolled in the Bachelors of Arts program with a major in Psychology. My long term plan is to achieve a PhD and work as an organizational psychologist.

How do you see your role here as an international student?

As an international student I think it is incumbent on me to make people aware of the diversity in India. It should be brought to notice how India has a global standing and yet is very much in touch with its varied traditions.

What is your connection to the Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies?

I am working as a research assistant at CICS and through it at The Reach Gallery and Museum researching their collection of archives that will be needed as the CICS develops exhibitions for the upcoming Centennial exhibition at the National Historic Site Sikh Temple. I have been going through archival material and researching information on the Indo Canadian pioneers who came to British Columbia at the turn of the last century.



CICS REPORT



Marilyn Smith with family members and Dr. Garry Fehr (Right: Gallery by Marilyn Smith)

Dr. Rajnish Dhawan presents play at the Reach

Dr. Rajnish Dhawan, UFV English instructor, presented his play "That Time of Year," on October 22, at the Reach Gallery and Museum. An enthralled audience took part in the onstage readings as some UFV students acted in roles. The play looks at marriage, gender, and sexuality as perceived through the lens of people in North America and India. The discrepancies in the two points of view, the assumptions about these issues, and the stereotypes on both sides were brought out in the play.



On the CASE Gallery opens at CICS

The opening of Marilyn Smith's photographic exhibit was a great success as community members, staff, and faculty attended a reception at the centre on the evening of Tuesday, October 26. Smith's photo essay On the CASE (Child Advocates for Social Empowerment) looked at the impoverished Janta Colony just outside of the metropolis of Chandigarh, India. Through the efforts of Developing Indigenous Resources (DIR), a medical team took on the task of assisting poor and malnourished families through health education. Smith's amazing exhibit highlighted both these families' impoverished state and the small pleasures in their lives as seen through the eyes of the young children. The photo exhibit was on display at the centre from October 26-29.

Upcoming Events

- January 10:** Kick off for Centennial Celebrations at Abbotsford City Hall, visit www.ufv.ca/cics/centennial to learn more.
 - March 29:** Ehsaas Readers and Writers Festival
 - April 1 – June 5:** Reach Gallery: National Historic Site Sikh Temple Exhibition
 - April 13:** Fraser Valley Indo Canadian Business Association's Annual Vaisakhi Luncheon
 - May 5 – 7:** Punjabi's in the 21st Century Conference and Undergraduate conference
 - May 7:** Centennial Gala to honour pioneers and community excellence awards
 - August 26, 27, 28:** Centennial commemoration at Historic Site Temple
 - September 23 – January 8:** Reach Gallery: Celebration of Punjab Culture and History
 - October 26:** Diwali
 - November 15 – 16:** Seventh Annual Ehsaas South Asian Film Festival
- For more information please visit**
www.ufv.ca/cics/announcements

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Comments/Suggestions:

We would appreciate any comments, suggestions, or inquiries about the Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies. Please feel free to email sharanjit.sandhra@ufv.ca or call 604-851-6325.

